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A WAY OF DIVORCEMENT

By Frank Chodorov

If it is in the interest of freedom that the Church and the State be kept apart, it is equally in the interest of freedom that the school be divorced from the State. That is so because it is impossible to immunize education against religious values.

To begin at the beginning, the substance of freedom is the right of the individual to make choices, without let or hindrance. That right is most highly cherished in the field of spiritual values. How we shall worship God, or whether we shall worship at all, is a matter we deem most private. For that reason, we insist that it must be outside the scope of political power; we know that if any religious order should possess itself of political power, it would be inclined to use it for the propagation of its dogmas and the suppression of others'. Nothing else can be expected, because every religious organization must logically consider dogmas other than its own erroneous, if not sinful.

So, then, it is to insure to us complete freedom in our choice of religious values that we have ordered the separation of Church and State.

Can we separate religious values from secular education? A religious value rests on faith. We accept it even though we cannot demonstrate it, because we cannot explain other demonstrable facts without this basic acceptance. In the earliest grades, the child learns that 2 times 2 is 4; that is true; but, what is Truth? That is a concept the philosophers have never been able to define, and in the final analysis we must accept abstract Truth on faith. The child could not get along with his education without it.

When the child gets to college, he is constantly confronted with basic acceptances; especially in those subjects that deal with human affairs: economics, political science, history, sociology.

II

There is, first of all, the question of "rights". Even the sixth-grader runs head-on into this concept. He feels -- without understanding -- that the teacher has invaded his "rights" when she shows favoritism. He hasn't figured out the origin of "rights", and he certainly can-

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not appreciate their religious character, as enunciated in the Declaration of Independence. But, without accepting the fact of "rights", independent of him and the teacher, he cannot make sense of his experience.

When the child becomes a sophomore he first learns that "rights" are merely permissions granted to the individual by a policeman, the State. If the sophomore should ask where the State gets the "rights" it hands out, or withdraws, he might be told that the "rights" were originally deposited with the State by the individual, on call. But, then, the question comes up, where did the individual get the "rights" in the first place? There is no answer, except the unsatisfactory one that the fellow with the big club gives or withdraws "rights" at will, simply because of the club. And the residual impression is that there is something divine in power. It is a religious impression.

A more important religious value that plagues secular education is the one we call "natural law". When education starts, the mother finds escape from the interminable "why" by replying; "that's the way it always is". She's got to take recourse to that vague acceptance after exhausting the plausible explanations, like the stork brought the baby, or the chair that hurt the child is a bad chair. Later on, the teacher goes to "the nature of things" for her final explanation; or, she might say, "it is the will of God". The final answer to all questions is an assumption.

But, the college professor is not so naive. He flatly declares there is no such animal as "natural law", that it is just an old-fashioned myth. The fact is, says the professor, that science is uninhibited by any rules of nature. Given enough time, the scientist will figure out answers to all the unanswered questions. That, of course, is an unprovable assumption, and calls for an act of faith, in the infallibility and omniscience of science.

The rejection of the theory of "natural law", however, has a very important bearing on our lives, besides opening the way for a new religious idea. If, for instance, there are no "natural laws" in economics -- no fixed and immutable causal relationships -- then what's wrong with economic planning? The all-important matter of making a living can be manipulated to bring about any results you want, and nature be damned.

To take another example, from the field of social science, those who begin with "natural law" will tell you that society is an organism that gestates, just like a baby, and you cannot do anything about changing the procedure. That is, society is not an artifact. On the other hand, the planning pragmatists come up with a Morgenthau Plan.

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But, have we eliminated religious values -- basic acceptances -- when we reject "natural law"? Not a bit of it. We have simply replaced one unprovable axiom with another. "Natural law" calls for faith in an unchangeable pattern of things; when we drop that, we must have faith in something else, and that something else always turns out to be political power. Even the all-knowing scientist, in the field of human relations, finds it necessary to implement his wisdom with political power; it can do all that God is presumed to be capable of doing, and then some.

The point is, you cannot divorce basic assumptions -- or spiritual values -- from secular education. This fact, however, did not bother our forefathers when they put the State into the education business. In those days, not even the agnostic questioned "natural rights", and while the philosophers quibbled over the meaning of "natural law", it never occured to them that freedom was in any way involved in this discussion. The religious concepts of freedom were so strongly imbedded in the hearts of our forefathers that they could not imagine the possible perversion of these concepts by the school.

III

The greatest phenomenon of the Twentieth Century is the rise of the secular religion of Statism. Just why and how it got going is not germane to this argument, but it is a certainty that the spread of Statism was facilitated by our schools. The votaries of this religion, whether by design or easy slithering, got themselves on the school payroll and, as evangelists have always done, went in for proselytising.

In the course of time, the students, indoctrinated in the schoolroom, manned the State; most naturally, they took their religious beliefs with them. So, we have a State religion coming in, so to say, by the back door.

Statism is a religion. It is a frame of thought based on unprovable hypotheses. Its primary assumption is that the State is a living entity, independent of its personnel. You can change the laws or the basic constitution, say the devotees of Statism, you can make a democracy into an absolutism, you can throw out the old crowd and vote in a new one -- but the State is immutable. Mortals come and go; the State is.

The State, then, is supra-personal. It has an intelligence of its own, and this is not the combined intelligences of living men; it is sui generis. Even its ethical standards are unrelated to those of men. It is made by men, to be sure, but it transcends man.

Statism has its rituals, its prayers -- "the State can do no wrong" -- its hierarchy and its holy edifices. It even has the inevitable

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schisms and sects: Communism, Fascism, Socialism, New Dealism. The differences between them are ritualistic, in the main, and follow from the degree of power achieved; as between Communism and New Dealism, for instance, the difference is that in one private property is abolished outright while in the other private property is taxed outright.

Regardless of these schismatic differences, all the sects are agreed on the basic assumption that "divinity doth hedge" the State.

This is the religion that is being taught or insinuated in our schools, from the lowest grades to the post graduate courses. A junior high school teacher (in New York) is required to take her "social science" class each week to some municipal department and explain its workings. Her explanations may be objective, but the multitude of desks in the tax department, the magnitude of the water works, the complicated mechanism of the sanitation department all have an educational influence. The glory of the State is the constant obbligato of such teaching. (This, by the way, is a technique of what is called "progressive" education.)

And, the medical student cannot but regard with reverential awe the State that teaches him a trade and promises him a job -- in the army.

Thus, a spurious religion, one that threatens our freedom more than any the Founding Fathers had in mind when they laid down the doctrine of separatism, has invaded our political institutions. For the same reasons that impelled them to bar the Church, the school should now be barred. In the interests of freedom, the public school should be dropped.

But, how? It seems to be an impossible operation; and yet, the legislature of South Carolina has inadvertently hit on a way. It has passed a law permitting local communities to go out of the business of education and to rent their buildings and equipment to private institutions.

If that idea were generally accepted and put into practice, neither Protestants, Catholics, Jews nor atheists would be compelled to support schools teaching the new, secular religion. The Statists, if they could find paying customers, could have their own schools, and be welcome. Every group would be free to teach whatever values seem best to them.

Under the South Carolina plan, the citizenry would be relieved of school taxes. Parents could then support schools of their own choice. And those parents who now suffer "double taxation" -- support of the schools that furnish the education they want, and taxes for the other kind -- would be in position to provide scholarships for children whose parents are less fortunate.

South Carolina has shown us the way to improve our educational system -- a way that could lead us out of the clutches of Statism.

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events Vol. VIII, No. 28

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By Frank C. Hanighen July 11, 1951

PRESIDENTIAL SWEEPSTAKES: The Administration strategists recognize the threat even if the Republicans don't. The White House knows that the principal danger to the continued power of the Administration in '52 is division within the Democratic Party. And they are setting their compass and course accordingly.

It should not be difficult to understand the basis of the Democratic reasoning. Only twice in the Twentieth Century has a ruling party been removed from power; (1) when a split in the GOP resulted in the election of Woodrow Wilson in 1912; (2) and when, in 1932, the Republican regime of Hoover was jarred out of office by the depression. With control of the economy in its hands, Administration strategists feel quite confident they can ward off any developing depression or deflation. But a split within the ruling Party now looms.

The directors of Administration political policy are giving the matter calm, but serious study; especially in view of a political analysis and forecast, which came from a candid Democratic friend who knows a thing or two about Presidential campaigns. This figure outlines what he thinks may well happen in '52, as follows:

The Southern revolt is serious. It might go so far as outright "realignment" with Republicans, but it is more likely that it will result in the Southern Democrats angrily nominating their own Southern candidate. This move would be based on the theory that even if the Republicans win, their policies could not be worse than re-election of Truman. This time (unlike '48), the leaders of the revolt are top-line figures -- Byrnes, Russell, Byrd and George. They could lead all the Southern States into a separate sectional ticket. The border states would split -- Oklahoma (Truman Democrat), Missouri (GOP), Kentucky (South), Maryland (GOP).

The Truman Democrats would take New York, Pennsylvania, maybe New Jersey -- possibly part of New England, possibly one or two states in the Middle West. Taft is the most likely GOP candidate, for failure in Europe would remove Eisenhower. He would take almost all of the West (there are now ten Republican Administrations in states west of the Great Plains). Taft should take almost all, if not all, of the Middle West states. The election results would show Taft a plurality winner with a narrow margin of control; a hardly enviable victory. But, Truman would be licked.

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STRATEGY: The directors of Democratic policy are studying the above analysis, and are moving to offset its threat. Their strategy is (1) to seek to diminish the threat from without by increasing the split in the Republican party; and (2) to try to prevent the North-South split, or at least to divide the ranks of Southerners.

The Youngdahl appointment is one move in the strategy of dividing the Republicans further. To remove the popular Republican governor of Minnesota from the 1952 lists is a good way -- in their eyes -- to promote disunity in a state GOP organization. It must be remembered that the Democrats gave Senator Ray Baldwin of Connecticut (who had played a comparable role in Connecticut to that of Youngdahl in Minnesota) a place on the bench in 1949. This sly maneuver was followed by what Connecticut people call the "dirty deal of 1950" -- as a result of which the Democrats won two Senate seats.

We would like to be able to report on the strategy for dividing the Southerners, but even the most loquacious Democrats won't say they know. The chances are that there will be similar appointments, grants of defense spending, etc. -- there are lots of

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ways of buying votes and loyalty. But, one thing is certain: the Administration will spare no intrigue in this endeavor, as we shall see in the following item.

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LEESBURG TEA PARTY: Recently, it was announced by the Administration press channels that Mr. Truman had met with Mr. Bernard Baruch at the home of Secretary Marshall in Leesburg, Va. (a half hour's drive from Washington). The President, out driving in his car, "happened" to drop in on Marshall and lo!, to his surprise, there was the aged financier visiting with the Secretary. That version was a little too thin for even the most slavish press stooges of the Administration.

Most commentators thought it was, of course, a well planned incident in the "fence mending" of the Administration. Mr. Truman saw no reason why he should remain on cool terms (which had been the case since 1948, when Baruch refused to raise money for the Democratic Party) with this powerful figure in American life. That -- it seemed -- was all.

Actually, it was much more. We learn from high Democratic circles that Mr. Truman was seeking the friendship of Mr. Baruch because of the latter's well-known friendship for and influence on Mr. James F. Byrnes. The latter was formerly Secretary of State and now serves as Governor of South Carolina. But, above all, he is regarded as one of the "ring-leaders" in the Southern revolt against the Administration. If Mr. Baruch, the Administration calculates, could be persuaded to approach Mr. Byrnes and to win him away from the new "secessionist movement" in the Democratic Party, those who seek to "divide" the Democratic Party could be divided among themselves and picked off at leisure. And "secession" would die.

According to last reports from those who saw Mr. Baruch, he was well satisfied with his meeting with the President. He was glad that the three year old feud is over. Why shouldn't he -- who had remained on good terms with so many Presidents of both parties -- resume cordial relations with Truman? However, the financier -- we are assured -- has no intention of going on any mission to influence Mr. Byrnes along the lines desired by the White House. So we hear. But we suggest that this angle of the situation bears watching.

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DEWEY: From people in a position to know such arcane matters, we learn that Governor Thomas E. Dewey's speech in Tokyo last week was cleared by the State Department. Indeed, Mr. Acheson's boys had no little to do with the inspiration for the Governor's journey to the Far East; although Dewey's recent attitude has been increasingly pro-Administration and he did not need much prompting.

This posture of the man in Albany is the subject of considerable study in the Capital. Dewey's advocacy of Eisenhower has been wearing thin. Ike had never liked Dewey and has had no contact with him since the European venture started. Dewey has felt this keenly -- and so there is much speculation that the New York Governor is cooling towards the General and warming towards the Administration.

If this be true, it is not unnatural since it parallels the shift of feeling in the White House. There, no one any longer talks -- even out of the corner of the mouth -- about how Truman might retire in '52 in favor of Ike. Now that Truman feels he can win in '52, the talk has stopped; and there is a noticeable lack of sympathy for the General in his present unhappy efforts to get the Europeans to rearm. Indeed, the psychology of the Administration, to some observers, appears to be: If he fails in Europe, he's out of the running at home.

Hence Dewey's relationship with the Administration received more and more attention here. There are even some who say that the New York Governor will be asked to accept the position of Secretary of State, succeeding Acheson. This is the purest speculation -- but one notices that observers, while incredulous, keep talking about it. For, it is obvious that on this front, too, the Administration strat-

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egy of trying to split the Opposition is working constantly.

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FOLKS FROM HOME: Listening to some Kansas City people at a party the other night, we noted their comments on Truman. They were discussing Fulton Lewis' recent revelations concerning the President's former career as an oil stock salesman, circa 1916-17, and the baneful results for his customers. Our friends all recalled the crash of the Morgan Oil and Refining Company, but they confessed that they had forgotten, if they indeed ever noticed it, that one Harry S. Truman was Treasurer and stock salesman for the ephemeral concern.

"That blue-sky deal" one said, "certainly caused a lot of talk in those days. One of the clever things the promoters did was to put the title 'Morgan and Company' on the bottom of the stock prospectuses. In those days, the name of the Wall Street bank of J. P. Morgan and Company was awfully impressive. We used to laugh at how the promoters of that oil stock tried to cash in on the famous name." It gave us a laugh to think of Harry S. Truman in 1916 cuddling up to the name of Morgan and then to recall his violent attacks on Wall Street in his campaign of 1948.

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THAT EUROPEAN ARMY: The organization which some in the Capital unkindly call "Ike's Folly" is in trouble. No better indication of this in the last week has been seen than the well-marshalled counterattack of the Administration shock troops among the commentators -- all asserting, on unsupported evidence, that Eisenhower's efforts are meeting with great success.

Unimpressed by this propaganda, Congressional tempers are rising. Last week, we reported how House members were suspiciously probing Marshall to get a true picture of the situation across the Atlantic. This week, Senator Kem in a radio broadcast reflects the increasing concern about "American troops for Europe". The Missouri Senator pointed out that one passage in the Senatorial resolution of last April 4 read: "It is the sense of the Senate that, in the interests of good constitutional processes, and of national unity and understanding, congressional approval should be obtained of any policy requiring assignment of American troops abroad. To this day the House of Representatives (one of the two branches of Congress) has not approved the sending of a single American soldier to Europe under the North Atlantic Pact. Nevertheless, American boys are now pouring through the New York Port of Embarkation by the thousands, sailing for the cockpit of Europe under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization."

Congressman Lawrence Smith (Wis.) in the House is protesting against this illegal situation. He wants to know why the Administration-controlled majority of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House has bottled up a resolution to call for a vote on the matter of "troops for Europe".

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PEACE WITH GERMANY: President Truman has commendably asked Congress to put an official end to the state of war existing between the United States and Germany. This move would draw more unqualified praise, if it were not so obviously part of the attempt to get the Germans into the European army. But, better late than never.

We may be pardoned if we discern in one passage of the President's call for ending the state of war something which smells very much like appeasement of Russia. If we are wrong, we may be excused for we find no less than the New York Times in their leading editorial (July 10) somewhat worried about the same passage. The President quite incorrectly said that about two-thirds of pre-war territory of Germany now lies within the borders of free West Germany. Actually -- as the Times well pointed out -- only about half of the 1937 territory of the Reich is under the Bonn Government. The rest is in the Russian zone or in the hands of the Soviet puppet Government of Poland. And the Bonn Government has laid formal claim to the former German borders.

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"Unless the American Government", says the Times, "wishes to recognize another Soviet fait accompli and drop its former objections to the Oder-Neisse line as Germany's eastern frontier this passage requires urgent rectification before the Soviets utilize it for a propaganda that could well offset the good effect of the present move."

We think this literary obscurity in the President's statement is no error at all; for the speech must have been cleared by the German desk of the State Department, which knows the facts as well as the Times.

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CROPS: From Middle Western members of Congress we have been hearing frequent assertions that the corn and wheat crops are not doing so well as represented by the official and optimistic announcements of the Department of Agriculture. It seems that there has been an excess of rain in the West, and the prospects are not so happy up to now. Now comes a piece from no less than the Washington Post, generally a pro-Administration paper, in which farmers are quoted as saying that these official forecasts are being doctored for political reasons.

"Some wheat men told this reporter", said Correspondent Ball of the Post, "in recent weeks they believed the winter wheat crop prospects were exaggerated last month to help passage of the wheat-for-India bill. Another suspected that the optimistic corn report was to hold corn prices down and thus help hold down hog prices, so that neither would go above parity and thus become liable to price ceilings." The Post reporter confirmed talk among Midwesterners on the Hill that excessive rain had held back the corn crop.

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MOVIE REVIEW: A moment after the curtain rises on "Good Bye, My Fancy", we see and hear the heroine, a well-tailored and beautiful Congresswoman, telling a group of newspaper reporters that she intends to fight until every woman in America has a fireless cooker and a mink coat: the way to achieve this is price control.

That, however, is not the theme of the story; it's just background material to put the lady in proper perspective. The story revolves about a film she made when she was a reporter. This film (it is described, not shown) is a documentary, dealing with the liquidation of "academic freedom" in Nazi Germany. She has brought her brain child to her alma mater, to be shown on this Commencement Day, when an honorary degree is to be conferred on its illustrious alumna.

However, the college president (her schoolgirl sweetheart) is a pusillanimous creature, always compromising with principle in favor of an endowment. He is browbeaten by the "reactionary" trustee into refusing to show the film to the girls. That gives our heroine the opportunity to deliver a lecture on "academic freedom".

Here you have the current "line" of the Lefties: Shout from the housetops about the suppression of thought on the campus. They are right, in charging that thought is being suppressed on the campus. The economics professor who does not teach collectivist economics is suppressed, or expelled; the history teacher who rejects the economic interpretation of history is suppressed, or expelled; the professor of political science who dares to speak up for "natural rights" is suppressed, or expelled; and the student brash enough to voice the doctrines of real liberalism (if he happened to learn about them outside the college) is courting social ostracism. Such is the real picture today.

But, some people -- "dirty reactionaries" -- are beginning to take notice. There is a slight resurgence of interest in individualism, a murmur of protest at the surrender of our ivory towers to the Lefties. This impudence has to be squelched. Hence the new "line". We have seen it in books, articles, newspaper stories -- and now in the movies.

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